

PD ISO/IEC TS 20071-21:2015



BSI Standards Publication

Information technology — User interface component accessibility

Part 21: Guidance on audio descriptions

bsi.

...making excellence a habit.™

National foreword

This Published Document is the UK implementation of ISO/IEC TS 20071-21:2015.

The UK participation in its preparation was entrusted to Technical Committee ICT/-/6, ICT Accessibility.

A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its secretary.

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

© The British Standards Institution 2015.

Published by BSI Standards Limited 2015

ISBN 978 0 580 87098 9

ICS 35.240.20

Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

This Published Document was published under the authority of the Standards Policy and Strategy Committee on 31 December 2015.

Amendments/corrigenda issued since publication

Date	Text affected
------	---------------

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

ISO/IEC TS 20071-21

First edition
2015-12-15

Information technology — User interface component accessibility —

Part 21: Guidance on audio descriptions

*Technologies de l'information — Accessibilité du composant interface
utilisateur —*

Partie 21: Directives sur les descriptions audio



Reference number
ISO/IEC TS 20071-21:2015(E)

© ISO/IEC 2015



COPYRIGHT PROTECTED DOCUMENT

© ISO/IEC 2015, Published in Switzerland

All rights reserved. Unless otherwise specified, no part of this publication may be reproduced or utilized otherwise in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, or posting on the internet or an intranet, without prior written permission. Permission can be requested from either ISO at the address below or ISO's member body in the country of the requester.

ISO copyright office
Ch. de Blandonnet 8 • CP 401
CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva, Switzerland
Tel. +41 22 749 01 11
Fax +41 22 749 09 47
copyright@iso.org
www.iso.org

Contents

Page

Foreword	v
Introduction	vi
1 Scope	1
2 Terms and definitions	1
2.1 General terms	2
2.2 Audio-specific terms	2
2.3 Language of presentation terms	3
2.4 Audio description production terms	4
3 Framework and process considerations for audio description	5
3.1 General	5
3.1.1 Alternate names for audio description	5
3.1.2 Motivation for audio description and spoken subtitles	5
3.2 Types of audio description	5
3.2.1 Live audio description	5
3.2.2 Pre-mixed audio description	5
3.2.3 Harmonious commentary	6
3.2.4 Extended audio description	6
3.3 Creating audio description	6
3.3.1 Narrator preparation	6
3.3.2 Content genre and programme category	7
3.3.3 Scripting	7
3.3.4 Writer considerations	7
3.3.5 Recording	7
3.3.6 Volume	7
3.3.7 Audio technician considerations	8
3.3.8 Inclusion of consumers in the process of creating audio description	8
3.3.9 Inclusion of consumers in evaluating audio description	8
3.4 Live audio description	8
3.4.1 Live narration considerations	8
3.4.2 Preparing for live narration	9
3.4.3 Narrator transitions in live audio	9
3.5 Pre-recorded descriptions	10
3.5.1 Creation of pre-mixed audio after main production process	10
3.5.2 Audio description team for pre-mixed audio	10
3.5.3 Evaluation of pre-mixed audio	10
3.5.4 Voices for pre-mixed audio	10
3.5.5 Sound engineering for pre-mixed audio	10
4 Guidance on audio description	10
4.1 General considerations	10
4.1.1 User considerations	10
4.1.2 Consistency across technologies	11
4.1.3 Consistency within a programme and series	11
4.1.4 Placement of descriptions	11
4.1.5 Use of pauses	11
4.2 Developing audio description	11
4.2.1 Clarity in audio description	11
4.2.2 Creativity in audio description	12
4.2.3 Narrating/reading audio description script	12
4.3 Styles of narration	13
4.3.1 Newsreader style	13
4.3.2 Commentator style	13
4.3.3 First person	13
4.3.4 Third person	14

4.4	Levels of importance.....	14
4.4.1	Using importance levels	14
4.4.2	Essential information.....	14
4.4.3	Significant information.....	14
4.4.4	Helpful information.....	15
4.4.5	Irrelevant information	15
4.5	General guidance on descriptions.....	16
4.5.1	Description of sounds.....	16
4.5.2	Logos/credits/titles	16
4.5.3	On-screen text.....	16
4.6	Guidance on identifying objects.....	16
4.6.1	Identifying objects.....	16
4.6.2	Describing colour.....	17
4.6.3	Describing visual effects.....	17
4.7	Guidance on identifying persons.....	17
4.7.1	Identifying characters or places by name	17
4.7.2	Physical appearance.....	18
4.7.3	Race/ethnic origin.....	19
4.7.4	Gender-related.....	20
4.7.5	Disabilities.....	20
4.7.6	Age.....	21
4.8	Guidance on relationships.....	22
4.8.1	General guidance on explicit content.....	22
4.8.2	General guidance on relationships.....	22
4.8.3	Establishing place/setting/time of day.....	22
4.8.4	Interaction between animated characters/objects and real actors.....	23
4.9	Guidance on parts of speech	23
4.9.1	Descriptive verbs	23
Bibliography		24

Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) form the specialized system for worldwide standardization. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work. In the field of information technology, ISO and IEC have established a joint technical committee, ISO/IEC JTC 1.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO and IEC shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation on the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the WTO principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: [Foreword - Supplementary information](#)

The committee responsible for this document is ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*, SC 35, *User interfaces*.

ISO/IEC 20071 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Information technology — User interface component accessibility*:

- *Part 11: Guidance for alternative text for images* [Technical Specification]
- *Part 21: Guidance on audio description* [Technical Specification]

Introduction

This part of ISO/IEC 20071 provides audio description developers and practitioners with guidance in creating effective content describing audiovisual material in an auditory-only modality, the style or manner in which audio description is delivered, the audio description script and script time cues, in relation to the original content. The circumstances to which audio description applies include recorded video, broadcast and broadband television, cinema, live or recorded drama, museum and art gallery exhibits, heritage tours, news, and comedies. Some of this content is static and unchanging, some is dynamic, some is expressed in a visual modality alone, and some in a combination of visual and auditory modalities.

An example of mainstream use of audio description techniques can be found in sports commentary. It can be enjoyed by diverse audiences and uses personalities, emotional expression, and reaction to content to express qualities of the original content.

Audiovisual material is produced for people who can see and hear. It is also typically produced in a specific language for a particular audience. Translations of the original auditory content and associated audio description can be provided in different languages. Providing audio description and translating into other languages can be beneficial to diverse users in diverse contexts, including persons who are blind or persons with low vision, persons with learning difficulties or cognitive impairments and, in the case of translation, persons who need the content to be in another language. Translating subtitles and other on-screen text and providing those in auditory form can also be beneficial.

Producing audio description can be thought of in a similar way to language translation in that it involves several kinds of subjective decisions, for example, the use of vocabulary, tone, speed, intonation, and expression. The accuracy and quality that audio describers or script writers can achieve is determined by matching the factors above with the requirements of the original content.

The creation and delivery of audio description based on the guidance in this part of ISO/IEC 20071 is not intended to interfere with or change the meaning of the original content, or the freedom of speech, expression, or opinion of rights holders.

A further benefit of providing audio description can be the raising of awareness of barriers experienced by blind persons and persons with low vision and other beneficiaries in accessing audiovisual content. The use of this part of ISO/IEC 20071 can also help embed universal and inclusive designed media content production practices in educational programmes (such as film, theatre performances, museum and art gallery exhibits, and other media).

Information technology — User interface component accessibility —

Part 21: Guidance on audio descriptions

1 Scope

This part of ISO/IEC 20071 provides recommendations for describing audiovisual content in an auditory modality for use in recorded video presentations, broadcast television, cinema, live or recorded drama, museum and art gallery exhibits, heritage tours, news, and comedies, regardless of the language and technology being used to transmit and present the recorded or live audiovisual content.

NOTE 1 There are many secondary users of audio description, but the primary and intended users of audio description are blind persons or persons with low vision and their friends and family.

This part of ISO/IEC 20071 provides guidance on the subjective nature of creating audio description.

It also provides guidance for audio description developers (script writers, voice narrators, and organizations or groups responsible for delivering audio description) in faithfully and accurately representing audiovisual content.

NOTE 2 It might not always be possible to provide an equivalent experience due to limitations in the amount of time available for audio description depending on the content being described.

This part of ISO/IEC 20071 applies to describing audiovisual content and does not consider the devices or transmission mechanisms used to deliver the content or the audio description. These devices include, but are not limited to, televisions, computers, wireless devices, projection equipment, DVD and home cinema equipment and other forms of user interface technology. Therefore, this part of ISO/IEC 20071 does not consider transcoding files for the various video outputs.

NOTE 3 Technical matters of transmission and distribution are covered by other International Standards (e.g. MPEG standards and other technical international standards such as IEC 62731).

This part of ISO/IEC 20071 provides guidance on how to approach user preferences, available styles and flexibility in approaches to audio description.

It does not apply to static images contained in electronic documents (see ISO/IEC 20071-11 for guidance on text alternatives for images).

It applies to auditory presentations intended to be transmitted or delivered simultaneously to the original audiovisual content.

NOTE 4 Limitations experienced by broadcasters or people in synchronous environments might be reduced online or in asynchronous environments.

2 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.